

best for what they consider the peasants in the vast rural areas.

Those elitists grew up in privilege and look down on the rest of the country. The elitists in the imperial kingdom of Washington, DC feel it's their privileged right and obligation to make the peasants happier because those rural Americans don't know how to take care of themselves.

Well, let me tell you the truth about those peasants. These great Americans don't look to Washington or the elites or the monarchy for their happiness. They find their happiness in their individuality. The folks that I represent in southeast Texas are patriotic citizens, many from small-town rural America.

They love their families and are proud of America. They are honest, hard-working independent citizens who, when duty calls, go off to war to defend this Nation. They attend church on Sunday, and if they don't attend, they still feel strongly about their religion.

They believe they have the personal right to bear arms. They are not bitter about life, but they are generally happy. They are not in need of big government coming in in the name of hope and change to control more of their lives.

Those in Washington would do well to remember that the salt of the Earth lives in small-town America. Government should keep out of their way, instead of interfering with their lives, their faith, and their right to bear arms.

And that's just the way it is.

BIG OIL

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, the presumptive Republican nominee for president, JOHN MCCAIN, has a solution to skyrocketing gas prices.

Is he going to take on Big Oil, their price gouging, and their obscene profits? No. Is he going to take on OPEC and their collusion to restrict supply and drive up the price in violation of international trade law? No.

Is he going to take on the hedge fund speculators on Wall Street that are driving up the price unnecessarily 50 cents a gallon so then they can make money? No.

He is going to be the GOP nominee, the Grand Oil Party nominee. He can't take that money. He has a solution. Suspend the Federal gas tax.

In 1993, the Federal gas tax was 18.3 cents and a gallon of gas was a buck. In 2008, a gallon of gas is \$3.50. The Federal gas tax is the same 18.3 cents. It's dropped to 5 percent of the cost.

If we follow his plan, we will cancel hundreds of needed bridge projects and highway projects across the country, throwing construction workers out of jobs, an already hard-hit sector, or maybe he is just going to borrow the money after he cancels the gas tax, be-

cause the only thing going up faster on the Republican administration than the price of gas is the national debt.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

(Mr. CARTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, this week is National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

This Congress should be working to make our cities, our streets, our States, our Nation safer for crime victims instead of talking about things like beaches and protecting union bosses.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children was created 10 years ago, and this is about to expire in a few months.

Let me tell you, having spent 21 years on the bench, I probably tried 250 to 300 aggravated sexual assault cases. One was an adult, the balance were children.

This is epidemic in this country. It's time for this Congress to get on board and work on the Internet Sex Offender Prohibition Act, which would punish people for using the Internet to find victims for their sexual offenses as child predators and would increase and enhance the punishment for those crimes.

This is important work. This is work this Congress needs to do to protect our children and make our streets safe.

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS IS FIGHTING TO MAKE THE TAX CODE FAIR AND PRO-FAMILY

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, as millions of middle-class Americans rush to the post office tonight to drop their tax forms in the mail, this Democratic Congress is fighting to make the Tax Code fair and pro-family.

Already this year we passed a budget that makes middle-class tax relief a priority. Our budget calls for extending middle-income tax cuts, including child tax credit, marriage penalty relief and 10 percent tax bracket.

Rather than supporting our budget, President Bush and congressional Republicans continue to push permanent tax cuts for multimillionaires. For 7 years now, President Bush's tax policy has disproportionately benefited the wealthiest few in our Nation.

Consider that the average millionaire is being given \$120,000 in tax breaks on their 2007 taxes, while middle-income taxpayers are, on average, receiving only about \$740.

As the income gap between the wealthy and the middle class continues to grow, we should prioritize middle-class tax cuts. If Congressional Repub-

licans are serious about providing continued relief to the middle class, they should support our final budget proposal.

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MIDDLE CLASS TAX CUTS

(Mr. ALTMIRE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, congressional Democrats are prioritizing tax cuts for the middle class. Our budget made clear that we intend to extend and pay for the Bush tax cuts that directly impact middle class families.

In fact, the Democratic budget identifies the specific tax cuts that we would like to see extended, such as: marriage penalty relief; the 10 percent lower income bracket; the child tax credit; small business expensing; and the R&D tax credit.

But like our fiscally irresponsible colleagues who advocate a continuation of this administration's failed economic policies, the Democratic budget achieves balance in 4 years and ensures that any increased spending or decreased revenue must be offset by comparable budget cuts.

Rather than just charging the cost to the national credit card and increasing our indebtedness to foreign nations like China and Japan, Democrats want to go in a new direction by ensuring that our budgets are balanced and our Tax Code is fair for all Americans.

AMERICANS ASK: WHY IS BUSH SPENDING BILLIONS IN IRAQ

(Mr. SIRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, on Tax Day, Americans have a right to ask why the Bush administration continues to spend taxpayer dollars on an Iraq war that has no end in sight and no plans for success.

Today, President Bush will spend more than \$338 million in Iraq. What exactly does that mean for the taxpayer sending in his or her form today? The typical taxpayer covers the cost of the war in Iraq for only one-half a second.

And while we continue to ship billions of dollars to Iraq while our economy is going south and our budget deficit continues to hit record highs every year, the Iraqi government currently has a surplus and is expecting to receive \$40 billion this year in oil revenues. Can someone please make sense of this policy?

Madam Speaker, the American taxpayer has every right to demand more accountability from Washington. Congressional Democrats continue to propose a change in policy, one that shifts more responsibility to the Iraqis themselves. They can certainly afford it. Unfortunately, President Bush and his supporters in Congress ignore the